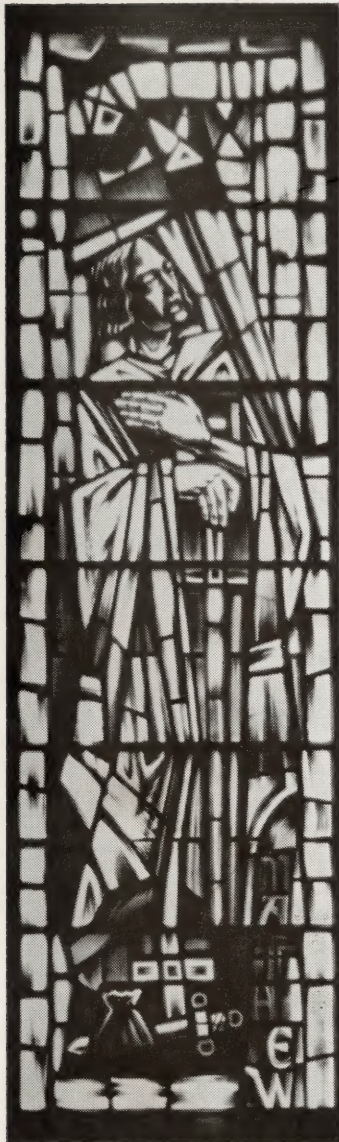


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# *Silver Jubilee*

ST. MATTHEW'S  
PARISH

AKRON, OHIO



SEPTEMBER 21, 1969







View of St. Matthew's Church and School

## HISTORY

### THE BEGINNINGS

On August 18th, 1943, the late Archbishop Edward F. Hoban established the seventeenth parish in Akron- the Parish of St. Matthew's. It was the first parish established by the Archbishop after his arrival in the Diocese of Cleveland. The Reverend Robert R. Wingerter was appointed as the founding pastor. The area of St. Matthew's consisted of areas from Annunciation parish and also from St. Paul's parish. The site of the parish was the territory in southeast Akron, known as Ellet. There were about 250 families in the area.

The Catholic families greeted the news of a new Parish with great delight. Among the most elated was the Charles Reymann Family on Berne St. and Canton Rd. Father Wingerter came to Father Dowd, the pastor of Annunciation, for advice and counsel, since the latter knew the needs and the area of the new parish. Father Dowd offered residence to Father Wingerter and together they went looking for a site for the new parish. They came to the Charles Reymann family and upon their departure, they had a parcel of land of about two and one-half acres donated by the Charles Reymann family for St. Matthew's. The plot of land was located east of Canton Rd., between Berne and Benton Sts., with the eastern boundary Woolf St. This gift of land was made just 2 days after the establishment of the parish and the appointment of Father Wingerter as pastor.



The First Mass to be offered in the territory of St. Matthew's took place on Sunday, September 12th, 1943 in the auditorium of the then Ellet High School - now known as Ritzman Elementary School. Mass was said here every Sunday until 1946.

In July of 1944, Father Wingerter purchased a home on the corner of Berne St. and Canton Rd. to serve as a temporary Rectory. On the property was a large garage with a spacious second floor. The parishioners banded together and remodelled the upper story of the garage into a Chapel where daily mass and devotions were held. The Chapel accommodated about 50 people.

Concerned as every pastor is about the Christian education of the children, Father Wingerter arranged for the Sisters of St. Dominic to come on Sundays and conduct religion classes between the Masses at Ritzman School and also at the Chapel on the grounds of the Rectory.

All construction of non-military buildings was at a standstill because of World War II, which was raging at the time of the founding of St. Matthew's. In the closing months of the war, when the end was in sight, shortages of building and manpower were alleviated and with this, Father Wingerter began the extensive building program of the parish plant. The first need was a suitable building for the Worship of God - a temporary Church. With plans approved, ground was broken on September 16th, 1945 in the presence of many parishioners, by the Right Reverend Msgr. Joseph O'Keefe, pastor of St. Mary's Church in Akron. This first building was to house a Church and a meeting hall. Completed more than a year later, the First Mass was offered on November 11th, 1946 by Bishop Edward F. Hoban. It served as a Church for 9 years and is now our Social Hall.

Father Wingerter then set about to provide a school and convent for the Sisters of St. Dominic who were to staff the school. In April 1949 a second floor was begun on the temporary Church. Plans called for 8 classrooms and a school office. On September 7th, 1949, St. Matthew's School opened its doors for the first time. The convent for the Sisters was completed shortly after the School opened. St. Matthew's was really progressing.

Construction costs, as we all know, are expensive. The debt of St. Matthew's became larger with each new building and the parishioners under the guidance of Father Wingerter conducted pledge campaigns, raffles, drawings, dinners, and carnivals to raise money to pay the debt and to finance further buildings. All helped in some way.

With new families coming into the area, as the result of the building of new developments, the facilities of St. Matthew's needed expansion. A permanent Church and an enlarged school were next on the program. Construction of these facilities began on April 15th, 1955. The Cornerstone of the Church was laid on August 21st, 1955, just 12 years after

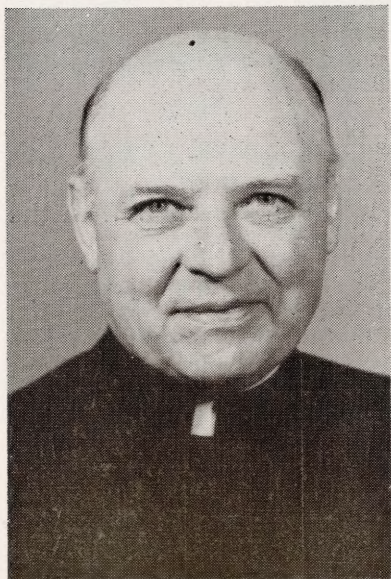


the founding of the Parish. It was a joyous day when Father Wingerter offered the First Mass in the completed permanent Church on February 5th, 1956. The new facility included 6 new classrooms and a library.

Just 4 years later, in April 1960, construction of a Rectory was begun on Benton St. Completed in December, 1960, the parish plant was almost complete. An addition to the Convent was the final phase of the building program.

## PASTORS

The parish of St. Matthew's in its span of 25 years has had 3 pastors. Under the direction of the founding pastor, the Reverend Robert R. Wingerter, the building program of the parish plant was carried out to completion. Under his diligent guidance, the parish grew into one of the finest parishes in the Akron area. Ill health beset Father Wingerter and forced him to give up the reins as pastor of the parish. On September 21st, 1962, Father Wingerter became pastor-emeritus and Father James L. Hart was named the new pastor.



Father R. Wingerter

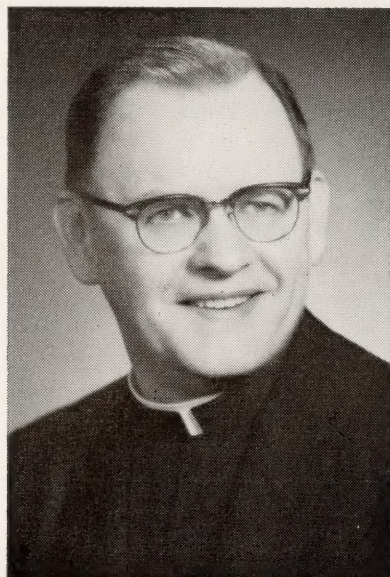


Father James Hart

Father Wingerter continued to live at the Rectory. Father Hart as the new pastor took over the administration of the parish and the care of Father Wingerter. His kindness to the founding pastor became known to all the parishioners. They saw the same kindness of Father Hart shown to all in the parish. It was the sad duty of Father Hart to arrange the funeral of Father Wingerter when he died on February 13, 1965. St. Matthew's suffered another sad day when Father Hart died unexpectedly on February 25th, 1968. After the burial of Father Hart, Bishop



Issenmann selected the Reverend Stephen M. Marjenin as the new pastor of St. Matthew's. Father Marjenin's appointment was effective on April 2nd, 1968.



Father Stephen Marjenin

The growth of any venture demands added personnel to take care of the many needs arising from the growth. St. Matthew's parish increased in the number of families taking residence in its area. With the increase and the demands of the building program, Father Wingerter asked for and received help. This help came in the person of Father Robert Teknipp, who became the first associate pastor of St. Matthew's in June of 1946. He was succeeded by Father Raymond Smith on May 21st, 1950. Father David Silva came as Father Smith's successor on February 7, 1955. Father Smith stayed 5 years and was replaced by Father John Anderson in May of 1960. Due to ill health, Father Anderson was relieved of his post in December of 1960 and Father Edward P. McCoy replaced him. With the parish growing in numbers, a second associate pastor was needed to carry on the work. Father William P. Lyons became the third member of the three priest team. Father McCoy was replaced by Father Gerald Keller, our present associate pastor on June 10th, 1965. Father Thomas C. Gilles, our present associate pastor replaced Father Lyons on June 8th, 1967.

Along with the above mentioned priests, special attention should be made of Father John Bruni of the Missionaries of the Sacred Heart at Shelby, Ohio, for his years of weekend help in the early years of St. Matthew's. At present, we are assisted by the Fathers from Borromeo Seminary who help us with Masses on Sundays.



St. Matthew's was selected by Bishop Issenmann in 1968 as one of the parishes to assist in the Deaconship Training Program of the Diocese. Ordained Deacons in this program are sent to selected parishes for their "on the job training" as it were. The Reverend Eugene Gonsowski had his Deaconship Training at St. Matthew's from July 1968 till his ordination to the Priesthood in May, 1969. Since July, 1969 - a new deacon is in training at our parish. He is the Reverend Thomas Sheehan.

## THE ASSOCIATE PASTORS



Father Edward P. McCoy



Father Raymond Joseph Smith



## THE ASSOCIATE PASTORS



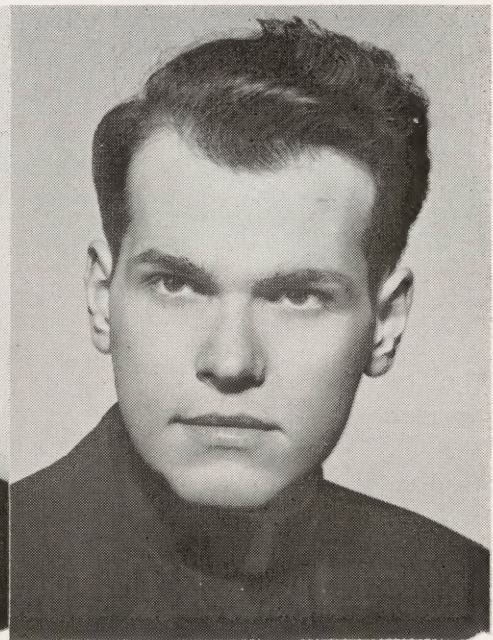
Father David E. Silva



Father John Francis Anderson



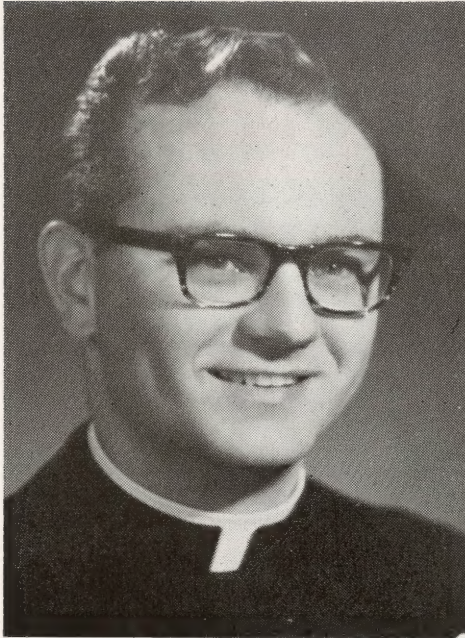
Father Robert Teknipp



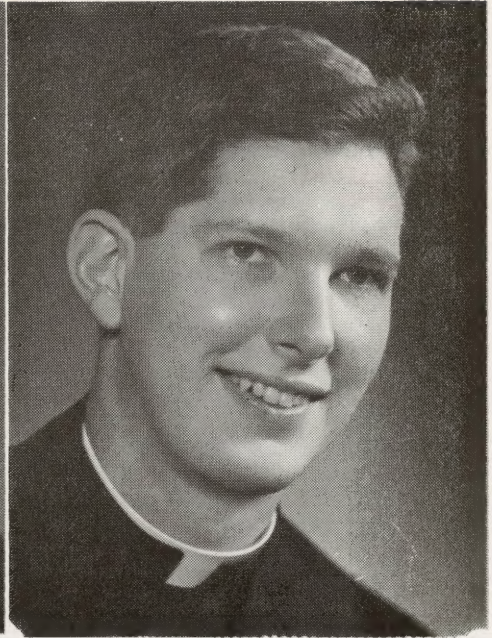
Father William P. Lyons



## PRESENT ASSOCIATE PASTORS



Father Gerald J. Keller



Father Thomas C. Gilles

## GOD'S CHOSEN PEOPLE

The material progress and development of St. Matthew's Parish and the dedication of those who have served here have meaning and value insofar as they have helped the people of our parish to answer God's call to be "a chosen race, a royal priesthood, a holy nation, a people set apart." It is through the Mass and the Sacraments that Christ draws us closer to God in holiness and to one another in service.

During these past twenty-five years, over 3300 infants and adults have been reborn in Baptism. Adopted as sons of God, they have been commanded to confess before men the faith which they have received from God through the Church. These have gone on to receive the sacrament of Confirmation in which the Holy Spirit endows them with special strength so that they are more strictly obliged to spread and defend the faith, both by word and deed, as true witnesses of Christ.

As partakers in Christ's Eternal Priesthood, our people take part in the Sacrifice of the Mass, offering their lives to God along with Christ, the Divine Victim. Strengthened in Holy Communion by the Body of Christ, they are further united with one another in the praise of their heavenly Father. Frequenting the sacrament of Penance, they obtain pardon from the mercy of God and at the same time are reconciled with the Church which they have wounded by their sins and which seeks their

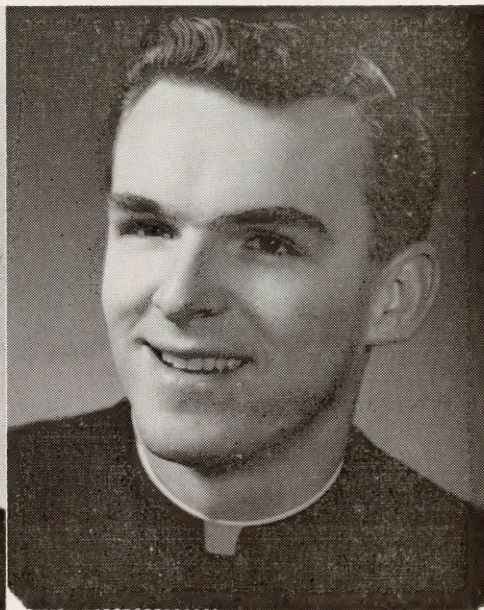


conversion. Through the Anointing of the Sick, more than 450 of our people have been commended, in their suffering and dying, to the Lord.

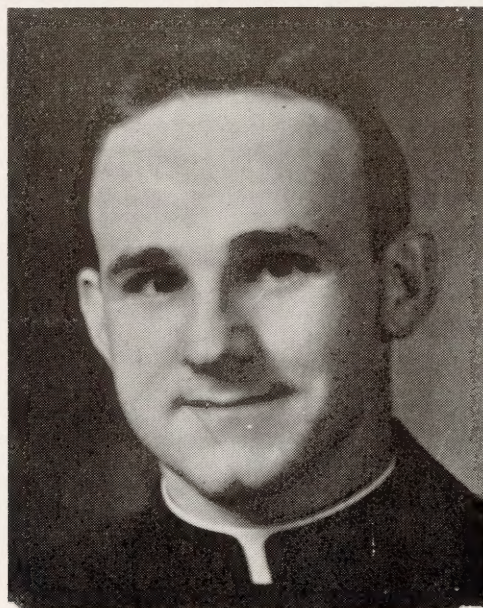
Three from our parish have been chosen by God to serve him as priests, appointed to bring to others, in Christ's name, the word and grace of God. Father Albert Reymann, a Maryknoll Missionary, celebrated his



Father James J. Reymann



Father Thomas W. McCann



Father Albert L. Reymann



First Mass at St. Matthew's on June 22nd, 1947. His Brother, Father James Reymann, celebrated his First Mass here on May 25th, 1958 and has spent his years in the priesthood as professor at Borromeo Seminary. Also serving the Diocese of Cleveland is Father Thomas McCann, who celebrated his First Mass here on May 26th, 1968. Young women from our parish have also answered God's special call to them by dedicating their lives to the service of others in various religious communities.



Reborn in Baptism



Strengthened in Confirmation

Finally, over 600 couples have been united in the sacrament of Matrimony. Strengthened by the grace of this sacrament, they have sought to grow closer to God through their total commitment to each other and to their children.

Flowing from Christ's ministry to us in these sacraments are the various organizations and activities of St. Matthew's. The faith that is bestowed in Baptism must be nourished by means of instruction and example. To this end the people of our parish have worked hard to provide religious instruction for their children both in our school and through the Confraternity of Christian Doctrine.



First Communion 1969



First Communion 1969





### Charter Members - Usher's Club



The responsibility of becoming witnesses for Christ, given in Confirmation, is fulfilled in many ways in the lives of our parishioners. For instance, The Legion of Mary and the St. Vincent de Paul Society directly assist the pastor and his associates in bringing Christ's love and concern to those in spiritual and material need.

### St. Matthew's first Study Club





## First Communion 1944



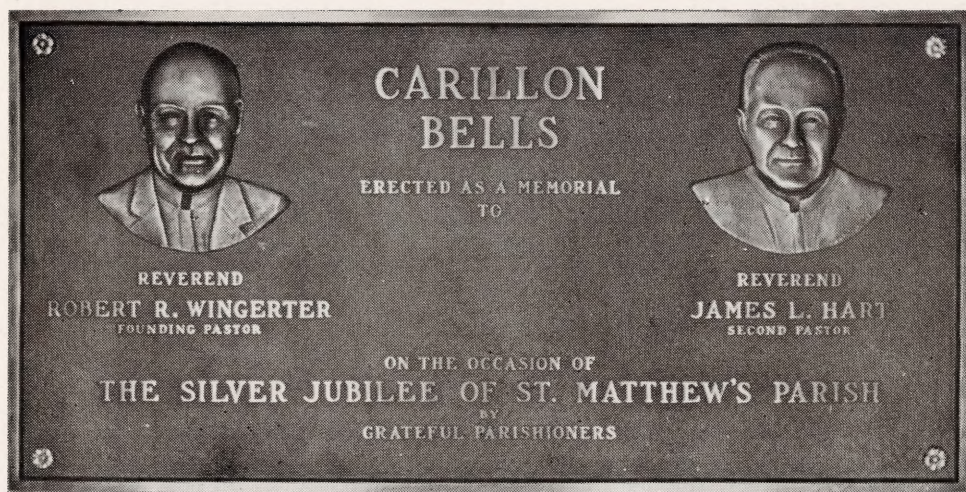
To help the Liturgy to be the fount and highest point of our parish life, a great number of our people give generously of their time and talents. Through the years, hundreds of young men and boys have assisted the priests at the Altar. Others assist the congregation in their participation by serving as Commentators and Lectors. The Choir leads the people in enhancing their praise of God through song. Finally, the Ushers assure the proper order in the church.



First graduating class of St. Matthew's School 1950



## PLAQUE



The unity of our people, which has its source and greatest expression in the Eucharist, is fostered by the social activities of our parish; the Holy Name Society for the men, the Sanctuary Guild for the women, and the CYO for the youth. Many boys and girls have also benefited from the Scouting program sponsored by St. Matthew's.

## THE FUTURE

On the occasion of our Silver Jubilee, we dedicated Carillon Bells to the memory of our late pastors, Father Wingerter and Father Hart. These bells serve as a constant reminder that, while being grateful for what we have achieved in the past, we must continue to project our vision toward the future. The generosity that we have shown in building St. Matthew's must now be channeled into forming ourselves into dynamic Christians. For instance, the times will make new demands upon us to make our Liturgy a living experience of our unity in Christ, to educate our entire parish in the meaning of our divine calling, and to prepare ourselves to have a genuine Christian influence upon the community in which we live. In these and other ways, we will continue to answer Christ's call to holiness.



Dedication of New Church



Cardinal Jchn Krol mourns with St. Matthew's at funeral of Father Hart







A Pioneer - Mrs. Charles Reymann welcomes new pastor - Father Marjenin



